



ISSUES ARISING REPORT FOR
Barford St John and St Michael Parish Council
Audit for the year ended 31 March 2016

Introduction

The following matters have been raised to draw items to the attention of Barford St John and St Michael Parish Council. These matters came to the attention of BDO LLP during the audit of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2016. This report must be presented to a full meeting of the smaller authority for review.

The audit of the annual return may not disclose all shortcomings of the systems as some matters may not have come to the attention of the auditor. For this reason, the matters raised may not be the only ones that exist.

The matters listed below are explained in further detail on the page(s) that follow;

- Accounting Statements not approved by 30 June
 - Minor issues
 - Annual Return Opinion not issued by 30 September
 - Inspection period for the exercise of Electors' rights
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The following issue(s) have resulted in the annual return being qualified. They indicate a weakness in the council's procedures and require the council to take immediate action.

Accounting Statements not approved by 30 June

What is the issue?

The smaller authority failed to approve Section 2 of the Annual Return ("the accounting statements") by the deadline of the 30 June, as specified on the Annual Return and stated in Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - The Practitioners' Guide and implied in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Why has this issue been raised?

This is a breach of proper practices as set out in the Practitioners' Guide 2016. By approving the annual return after the 30 June, the smaller authority prevented the RFO from discharging their obligations under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in respect of commencing the period for the exercise of electors' rights. This period must include the first 10 working days of July, meaning that for the 2015/16 annual return, the last possible date for approval was 30 June.

What do we recommend you do?

The smaller authority must ensure in future years that the accounting statements are signed by the RFO and then reviewed and signed as approved by the smaller authority meeting as a whole, by the latest date in order to comply with the electors rights dates, which must include the first 10 working days of July.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 - legislation.gov.uk website
Governance and Accountability for Local Councils March 2016 - The Practitioners' Guide - NALC/SLCC/ADA

Annual Return Opinion not issued by 30 September

What is the issue?

The annual return opinion was not issued by the 30 September and therefore the smaller authority were unable to publicise completion by that date.

Why has this issue been raised?

The Accounts and Audit Regulations state that the notice of completion of the review must be displayed by the 30 September.

What do we recommend you do?

The deadline was not met due to the electors' rights period not being set in accordance with the regulations and this delayed us giving our opinion. The smaller authority must ensure in future it undertakes the electors' rights period in accordance with the regulations.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

The following issue(s) have been raised as there are minor errors on the annual return which we wish to draw to the attention of the council so they do not occur again in future years.

Minor issues

What is the issue?

The following issues have been raised as minor issues or omissions have been identified in the current year's Annual Return:

The smaller authority has included grant monies received in box 2, rather than box 3, other receipts.

The comparative figures disclosed in Section 2 of the Annual Return do not agree to the audited Annual Return for last year. We believe the figures have been input in error but the error does not affect the balance carried forward into the current year.

Why has this issue been raised?

This is to draw these minor errors to the attention of the smaller authority.

What do we recommend you do?

The smaller authority should ensure in future years that the above minor errors or omissions are not included in the Accounting Statements.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England - A Practitioners Guide, NALC/SLCC

The following issue(s) have been raised to assist the council. The council is recommended to take action on the following issue(s) to ensure that the council acts within its statutory and regulatory framework.

Inspection period for the exercise of Electors' rights

What is the issue?

The inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights did not include the first 10 working days of July as specified in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which this year is from the 1st to the 14th July 2016.

Why has this issue been raised?

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 para 15(b) state that the inspection period for the exercise of electors rights must include the first 10 working days of July. The smaller authority has not complied with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

What do we recommend you do?

The smaller authority must ensure that the inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights includes the first 10 working days of July next year in accordance with the regulations in force.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

No other matters came to our attention.

For and on behalf of
BDO LLP

Date: 24 October 2016
